



INCULCATION OF VALUES: REMINISCING VIVEKANANDA AND AUROBINDO

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ABSTRACT

Indian society is undergoing a tremendous phase of turmoil with respect to social values. In the light of the rapid increase in the incidents of torture especially on women, girls and human beings in general in our country, pushing the huge mass of the Indian population towards the growing concern over the erosion of essential values amongst us. It therefore makes it all the more essential to re-think what went wrong in inculcating personal, social, cultural, familial, democratic, religious and intrinsic values at the seedling stage. This paper tries to focus on Swami Vivekananda and Sri Aurobindo's thinking about value education, where they converge and diverge in the path to value education. The study intends to make everyone aware of one's social values in order to make the world a better place to live in with gratitude, sympathy, empathy, hospitality, belongingness and many more. Values are inner belief system of us which guide us and motivate our inner self to go forward for build up a better society as well as better mental health of our community. The need for value education is the call of the 21st Century, as value education depends a lot on the value choices that are made deliberately and not left to chance. The choices of values that help a person to be socially effective, happy, friendly, compassionate, self-disciplined, tolerant, honest and dependable. It gives meaning to our life and strengthens our character which is reflected by our own attitudes, decisions, relationships, behaviour etc.

KEYWORDS: Indian, value education, erosion, empathy, gratitude, sympathy.

In the present day world, man is proceeding towards materialism and utilitarianism, which is spreading fast like forest fire in all aspects of life and society. Both the people of the east and the west are seen to be suffering equally under ceaseless unrest and turbulence, leading to a decline of human values in the contemporary world of today. Humanity today has reached a state of crisis where a radical change in the structure of the society is imperative (Singh, 2019).

The tremendous emphasis today is on the mechanical and scientific ways of life in making the man act and behave like a machine. Moral and religious values have lost in the concrete jungle and what prevails is the conflict of ideas, manners and habits. The complete disregard of everything old is in vogue today, and this is what has led mankind towards a state of crisis (Aneja, 2014).

We have outstanding doctors who are into organ robbery, brilliant engineers who build bridges but soon collapse after their bills are passed, accountants who rob the government treasury with the help of manipulation, civil servants who become emperors and rule, and politicians who make fake promises (Aneja, 2014). To add to this we have newspaper reports stating that India has been ranked as the world's most dangerous place for women, because of its high incidences of sexual violence, lack of access in rape cases, child marriage, female feticide and human trafficking. India has in fact outranked countries such as Syria and Afghanistan that are currently at war (Gowen, 2018).

It was therefore thought necessary by the authors to re-ignite and re-awaken the society at large about the sayings and teachings of Swamiji and Sri Aurobindo. This is because value education has always been the foundation of every human existence and has never been out of style. Thus the main task of today's educational system is to make the youth of today a good human being while inculcating moral values in him.

Both Swami Vivekananda and Sri Aurobindo Ghosh believed in the philosophy of apotheosis from the mundane to the spiritual that formed the core of their value based education (Singh, 2019). According to Swamiji and Aurobindo it is a transformation of the human consciousness towards a higher platform. This higher consciousness would in turn transform and mend the broken walls of the house of human civilization (Singh, 2019).

VALUE EDUCATION ACCORDING TO SWAMI VIVEKANANDA AND SRI AUROBINDO

Vivekananda had a motivating, liberal and august personality. He was considered an icon because of his encouragement to youth and discourses on practical Vedanta. His positive spiritual thoughts motivated the youth to become strong pillars of the nation who through their virtues would enrich the country on these small tablets of wisdom that would be the basic principles of education. He was a true mark of an enlightened soul because he preached tirelessly and worked towards salvation. He preached that divinity would be found through the paths of karma, gnana and bhakti (Singh, 2019).

On the other hand "Aurobindo was the glory of Indian renaissance and nationalism, his moral and intellectual achievements influenced the society tremendously. He was an exhibitor, patriot, philanthropist and socio-political thinker. His magnum opus, the life divine enumerates the ideal of upliftment towards the higher level of existence. Savitri became the exponent of a new vein in the spiritual poetry ample of higher knowledge. His teachings were referred to as the integral yoga which declared the presence of the supreme reality in the components of the cosmos." (Singh, 2019). He was a rare combination of a poet, philosopher, writer and spiritual master (Lalitha, 2018).

Swamiji gave importance to value education in creating a strong nation. By this he meant building in the children a strong sense of compassion for others and the nation. He always said that Indian civilization was one of the most tolerant civilizations and always had a great value based educational system that formed an integral part of a child's life. He said that this system of education received a setback under the colonial rule, where the British people were more eager to create a generation of elitist that would look Indian but would be westernized in their behavior, mannerism and thoughts (Katariya, 2011). Being a religious monk Vivekananda stimulated the intellectual of Europe and America of Indian vedantic wisdom through his speech in parliament of world religious in Chicago and subsequent tour of Europe in the last decade of the 19th century. Yet he did not support the atrocities of the older tradition, rejecting whatever was irrational, inhuman or obsolete in Hinduism, e.g. ritualism, rigid caste rules, and superstitious beliefs and practices and outdated customs. He wanted to give the Hindu religion a makeover in such a manner that it could be strong and cope with the challenges of changing India. To him 'education is manifestation of perfection already in man'. He truly believed that knowledge consumed within the soul could not be obtained from the outside. Thus it is a process through which inner knowledge is awakened giving a complete transformation to the human being. To him education should be advancement of life, development of the highest powers and capacities and enfoldment of noblest potentialities of the student than just be an advancement of the theoretical knowledge. The child would at the same time apply intelligently all ideas thus learnt and gathered that would bring about his intellectual, moral and spiritual growth (Katariya, 2011).

According to Aurobindo, human beings are still evolving to reach a more perfect state of consciousness. The impulse to exceed oneself is an innermost call of the human being. Man to him is a 'transitional being' and education must be based with respect to the total being, meaning that each child should individually develop, and strengthen the instrument of knowledge in the physical, affective, mental and spiritual domain (Hupples, 2010). Aurobindo preferred self-directed learning, where values would be taught not as a separate subject but entirely integrated in the educational process, and the role of the teacher was to evoke in the child the capacity to develop and perfect himself. It starts with self observation, where he discovers his capacities, qualities and weaknesses and in the process this becomes gradually transparent to him. Through this entire process the child becomes aware of himself and starts to learn by himself which are then guided by the inner urge for progress and finally augments and perfects his abilities in as

many domain as capable of. Through his inner discipline his weaknesses are corrected and overcome, thus education become a process of constant learning and self perfection in which the content of subject serves as a mean through which he develops himself (Huppes, 2010)

"Everyone has in him something divine, something his own, a chance of perfection and strength in however small a sphere which God offers him to take or refuse. The task is to find it, develop it and use it. The chief aim of education should be to help the growing soul to draw out that in itself which is best and make it perfect for a noble use" (Sri Aurobindo, 1990, P-21)

RELEVANCE OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA AND SRI AUROBINDO GHOSH IN THE PRESENT TIMES

The Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Vedanta movement saw the revival of the universal religious spirit of Vedanta in the twin institution of Ramakrishna Math and the Ramakrishna mission. The mission was meant for carrying out social welfare activity while the math established in Belur in 1889, concentrated on the training of monastic workers and for disseminating spiritual teaching. The word 'mission' means an organized special service done in a spirit of worship of the divine-in-all beings (Gahananda, 1991).

The Ramakrishna math was founded to provide exclusive spiritual training. The math accommodates all forms of spiritual discipline (in thought and an action) in the light of the wonderful teachings of Sri Ramakrishna and provides for spiritual development to all orphans belonging to different faiths and creeds along with their own lives (Sen, 1926). Swami Vivekananda intended to construct humanity on a spiritual foundation in the present age.

His four fundamental truths are as follows:

- I. The world phenomena is ever changing and inter-dependant and is held by one eternal idea reality usually called God, who answers the man's concept of perfection every day.
- II. Every individual goes through a system of psycho-physical system of change that is constant, self luminous ever pure and free.
- III. The central principle of the microcosm is not different from the central principle of the macrocosm, that is to say, there is kinship or unity between the soul of man and the soul of the universe. The truth is, what is inner most in the one is innermost in the other.
- IV. In order to realize the relationship, the goal of all human life should be regulated keeping this thought in mind

(Satprakashananda, 2014)

Swamiji said spiritual unity should be the goal of all human knowledge. As it unites all forms of existence and penetrates all phases of life. That this imperfect world was perfect in its very bases and being. It had manifestation through divergent forms of existence.

According to Swamiji our greatest defect is that man is so much drawn to the ideal and the goal is so much enchanting, alluring that we loose site of the details all together. Whenever failure comes after analyzing critically we find that we did not pay attention to the means. Strengthening of the means is what we need. We forget that it is the cause that produces the effect, the effect cannot come by itself, and unless the causes are exact, proper and powerful the affect will not be produced. Once the idealist chosen and the means determined we may let go of the ideal because we are sure it while be there when the means are perfected (Avinashilingam, 2016).

According to Swamiji, "We want that education by which character is formed, strength of mind is increased, the intellect is expanded and by which one can stand on one's own feet" (Purkait, 2001)

Swamiji says, "The end of all education, all training should be man making". He also says: "the training by which the current and expression of will are brought under control is called education. Creation of self-confidence and self realization should also form the aims of education. Education must make a man conscious of his hidden powers. All knowledge he discovers within himself. With this knowledge or divine light, he can work wonders" (Purkait, 2001). Vivekananda was of the view that character is the aggregate of man's tendencies, the sum-total of his mind. Good and evil thoughts equally mould the character of an individual. Education should aim at sublimating the evil tendencies of our mind. Moral education can help greatly in this regard (Purkait, 2001).

We can see Aurobindo's thought has been translated into reality in 'Pondicherry ashram' and at aurobindo's 'Auroville'- An International Centre of Education also in Pondicherry (Mohanty, 1988). It was (Cenkner, 1976) who stated that the school in the ashram began in December 1943, for the children of the disciples where the classes are the ashram buildings and grounds. The teachers are the disciples and the teaching method emphasized upon the discovery of the psychic being with its focus on education and full development of personality.

The inmates of the ashram are free from the grip of economic and material values that not only enables them to live up to Gita's ideal of "yoga is still in works". But also radiates the message that "yoga is joy in all works" (Purani, 1989).

In the ashram, there is no concept of high or low. All are equal, young, old, men, women, children, poets, musicians, artists, physicians, surgeons, civilians, lawyers, and people from all works of life. Everybody engages in some fruitful action depending upon their capacities and possibilities. This is why each one of them senses a feeling of rhythm, a sense of harmony and an elevating peace that prevails in the atmosphere of the ashram (Purani, 1989).

The centre helps the individual to become conscious of his own genius in the nation and puts him into immediate contact with the modes of thought and living of all people. Thus an attempt is made from the very beginning to integrate spirituality and education in the progressive realization of integral education (Cenkner, 1976). The centre is still committed at the present to a synthesis of knowledge and work culture where yoga is the dynamic principle of education (Joshi, 1967).

It helps in the following:-

- I. The fullest development of the body.
- II. A fruitful canalization of the life – energy in pursuits that contribute to the growth of the personality.
- III. A full training of the mental capacities.
- IV. The requisite help, through a powerful spiritual atmosphere to the soul to come forward and gradually begin to govern the rest of the being.

(Bhatia & Bhatia, 1989)

Thus we can say that the school visualized by Sri Aurobindo aimed at bridging the gap between the child's life and school and home. In contrast to these, the present day educational system is purely an instruction of information, assisted by subject-time bound curriculum that does not relate to the needs of the abilities of the learner nor take into consideration the way children learns successfully. The school focuses in competition, mastery of the subject matter, rather than learning with cooperation from one another to personal growth and welfare (Lal, 2013). While in the school following Aurobindo's philosophy of education, focus is on modifying the school curricula, maximizing the learning modalities, helping the child to achieve his true potential at his own pace & level and devote enough time to discover himself (Lal, 2013).

CONCLUSION

In a culturally plural society education must foster universal and eternal value oriented towards the unity and integration of our people. Value choices must be deliberately chosen and must not be left to chance. It has to be secular, global and familial accepted values must be embraced taught, encouraged and supported internationally, nationally, locally and personally (Charles & Selvi, 2014).

The prevailing crisis of values in the present society has left a negative impact upon the mindset of the youth today. They have fallen into the clasp of eroding values such as dishonesty, insensitivity, lack of punctuality, disrespect for elders, disregard for work culture, greed for earning money, earning wealth by easy and foul means, lack of patience, absence of the value of true leadership, lack of compassion, lack of sensitivity towards everybody that is being reflected in a plethora of kidnapping, raping, murdering, acid burning so on and so forth (Charles & Selvi, 2014).

We have to remember that today's youth will be the citizen and the nation builder of tomorrow. The values that they cherish or disregard today will certainly affect the nation in future, positively or negatively. The task therefore falls on value oriented education to minimize the present day crisis that the society is going through and bring about a change in the nature, vision, thought, character of the youth, of the citizens, politicians, administrators leading to the nation, society and the world (Charles & Selvi, 2014).

Values are extremely important and desirable and should be held in high esteem by any society and by any man. It gives strength to individual's character by occupying the central position in his life. We may say that values are like the rails that keep the train (individual) on the track and help it travel more smoothly, quickly and with direction in the journey towards his destination.

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